



# Marion County Soil & Water Conservation District 2013 Annual Report

Indianapolis, Indiana

## Chairman's Report

By Brian Neilson, Chairman

The District wishes you a very Happy New Year! The District continues to provide direct Technical, Financial and Educational services for Marion County conservation practices. We have gone through a lot of changes within our board over the past 12 months. As we say goodbye and thank you to those supervisors who are leaving, we also say hello to our new board members. Part of all of this change includes the implementation of our new strategic plan with the sole intent of continuing to lead in our local and regional urban conservation initiatives.

This year we sadly say goodbye to our friends Marvin Brethauer and Mark Kautz. With Marvin's and Mark's personal retirements, we wish them best of luck to each of them as they move into the next chapter of their lives. The District looks forward to continuing to receive their years of experience and insight as Associate Supervisors. The District can't thank each of them enough for all they have provided and contributed to the Indianapolis metropolitan area over the past decade plus. Thank you Marvin and Mark!

The District welcomes our new Supervisors, Heather Buck and John Hazlett to the board. Both Heather and John bring unique backgrounds and expertise in urban conservation that helps strengthen the District's continued growth and relationship with the residents of Marion County. Please



visit our website [marionswcd.org](http://marionswcd.org) or see page 5 of this report for addition information on all our supervisors.

District staff, Glenn Lange, Julie Farr, and Marilyn Hughes, continue to provide project erosion control technical review and oversight for private development throughout Marion County. The District also continues our great relationship with the City of Indianapolis providing technical assistance and oversight for all transportation and stormwater construction pollution prevention and erosion control. The District also continues to partner with County utilities and Cities to provide conservation technical resources.

This year the District continued to work with many of our existing friends and partners. Key to our year long successes was our making new friends and partnerships throughout the region. Key to these partnerships is the work continued being performed by District employee Leslie White with the Fall Creek Watershed Partnership (FCWP). The FCWP provides

*(Continued on page 2)*

The Marion County Soil and Water Conservation District works to provide technical, financial, and educational services to help Marion County land users conserve soil, water, and related natural resources.

*(Chairman's Report from page 1)*

conservation cost share program for the residents of Marion, Hamilton, Hancock, and Madison Counties.

The District continues to partner with the Upper White River Watershed Alliance and its diverse coalition in implementing the Upper White's extensive Cost Share Program and the local and Regional Clear Choices Clean Water campaign. These programs focus on urbanized waterways as well as provide ongoing public education and public participation program that is directed to our personal choices. These choices include our lawns, pet waste management and septic tank operations.

In addition to all of these programs and activities, the District also continues to support the implementation of agricultural and urban Best Management Practices (BMPs) including Green Infrastructure techniques for continued public cost shared water quality enhancement construction. These include the opportunity for the public to implement such things as rain gardens, green roofs, permeable pavement, wetland creation/restoration and conservation farming techniques including cover crop considerations to reduce sediment and storm runoff pollution.

The District continues to bring in outside financial resources to the benefit of Marion County. In 2013, the District has brought in over \$2.40 of urban and agricultural conservation grant funding for every dollar of our budget. With these resources, we are able to continue

our conservation and public education programs. These programs include our: soil erosion and sediment control efforts; annual spring and fall tree, shrub and rain barrel promotion; backyard conservation program; continued presence at Earth Day and other events with our educational booth and conservation program DYI information; our newsletters; our public presentations; our participation in the City of Indianapolis' Stormwater National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program; updating our website resource distribution capacity; and, our private landowner technical assistance for drainage and stormwater issues, to name but a few.

As we look forward to 2014, we want to take this opportunity to thank all of those who have continued to partner with and support us. The list is extensive, but I specifically want to thank the City of Indianapolis and Mayor Greg Ballard, the Department of Public Works, Department of Code Enforcement, Marion County Health Department, Citizens Energy, the Indianapolis Airport Authority, and the City-County Council for their continued faith in us, partnerships and financial support of our efforts. My personal thanks to our District staff and partners and of course to our all volunteer District Board of Supervisors - Dennis Slaughter, Mark Kautz, Paula Baldwin, Marvin Brethauer, Heather Buck, and John Hazlett.

But we are not done. As we look

forward, the District envisions continuing to expand our urban and agricultural conservation and water quality enhancement programs and public education. Our 2014 vision is to continue to bring in local, regional and national resources to further enhance our ongoing programs as well as look to increase our technical, financial, and educational services for Marion County residents and land users. In order to best accomplish these services we very much welcome your input and participation with our efforts. Please join us for our Annual Meeting on Tuesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 p.m. in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor conference room of Discovery Hall on the State Fairgrounds and get acquainted with our Staff and Board! And keep an eye out for our newsletters and website for announcements of our programs and resources that will provide you the opportunity to have direct, interactive participation with us... Your Marion County Soil and Water Conservation District.



# Marion County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) 2013 Annual Activities Report January 1, through December 31, 2013

The Marion County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is a unit of state government, supported primarily by the City-County Council with some funds from state government. The SWCD was established to provide technical assistance to Marion County residents and land users concerning the proper management of soil, water and other related natural resources. We work closely with local government, community organizations and residents on such items as water quality and drainage issues, soil erosion and sedimentation control, green space and wildlife habitat, conservation planning and education to help create a better quality living environment for everyone in the county.

This 2013 annual report was developed to keep city, county, and federal level legislators, government agency directors, and various community leaders informed of our on-going activities. This is just a snapshot of our activities, anyone with any questions or comments are encouraged to contact our Marion Co. SWCD office at Discovery Hall, Suite 200, 1202 E. 38th St., Indianapolis, IN 46205 for more details. Our phone number is 317-786-1776, and our web site is [www.marionswcd.org](http://www.marionswcd.org)



Assisting Residents with Flooding Issues



Construction Site Reviews & Inspections Help Prevent Pollution



Fall Creek Partnership - Conservation Practices Improve Water Quality

## I. 2013 Major Natural Resource Projects Summary

In addition to on-site visits, additional SWCD educational and outreach efforts were completed to help the SWCD program communicate, coordinate, and cooperate with others on conservation needs and solutions for landowners and landusers in the county. The efforts can take a minimum of 2-4 hours to several days depending on the type of activity needed.

Project Summary	Numbers	Date	Comments
• Clean Water IN Grant -Fall Creek Partnership	180 Contacts	during year	Public Outreach
• CWI Fall Creek Partnership (\$11,314 Cost Share)	21 Projects	during year	Backyard Conservation Practices
• CWI Fall Creek Partnership Presentations	30	during year	Public Outreach
• City of Indianapolis-DPW & DMD MOU & NPDES Report	3 items	12/01	MOU, budget & report
• City of Indianapolis -DPW Water Quality Meetings	10 meetings	during year	Water Quality issues
• City of Indianapolis - Rezone Indy Task Force	4 meetings	during year	Redevelopment Zoning Rules
• City of Indianapolis-DPW, DCE & Contractor SWPPP Training	2 meetings	during year	Water Quality Training
• Indianapolis Airport Project Manager SWPPP Training	1 meeting	11/12	Water Quality Training
• Indiana Association of Conservation Districts Conference	3 days	1/7-9	Board & staff attended
• INAFSM Stormwater Quality Inspectors Meetings	5 meetings	during year	Water Quality Planning
• INAFSM Annual Meeting	250+	4/28	Hosted SWCD Booth
• Marion Co. SWCD Annual Meeting w- Annual Report	50+	2/19	Reported accomplishments
• NRCS State Technical Committee	3 meetings	during year	Farm Bill Technical Issues
• Native Plant Workshop	1 meeting	3/06	Native Plant Training
• Upper White River Alliance	5 meetings	during year	Assisting watershed/member
• Indianapolis Earth Day at White River State Park	250+	4/28	Hosted SWCD booth
• Tree, shrub, & rain barrel Sale	75 trees	10/12	Also sold 5 Rain Barrels
• Reconnect To Our Rivers (ROW) - grassroots movement	3 meetings	during year	Serve on Technical Committee
• Attended IN Urban Forest Council Meetings	3 mtgs	during year	SWCD is a member
• Affiliate Member Program ( and other Donations)	\$275	during year	Seeking local \$ support
• New Marion Co. SWCD website	1 item	during year	Shares info about SWCD & Conservation
• Created and updated District Informational Leaflets	11	during year	I & E on Natural Resource Topics
• NRCS State Technical Committee	6 mtgs	during year	Farm Bill Technical Issues
• Distributed newsletter on activities & watershed programs	3 / yr	during year	2,500+ on mailing list

**The Marion County Soil and Water Conservation District is working every day to help people care for the land and provide a better quality of life in our community.**

**II. Natural Resource Technical Requests, Contacts, & Visits with Landusers**

Through on-site visits, telephone calls and written recommendations, the district assists landowners with drainage, water management, erosion control, vegetative management options, and other related natural resource topics. These assistance efforts take an estimated amount of hours shown below depending on the type of assistance provided to schedule, inventory available site data, visit the site, plan recommendations, and respond to the request with written comments to the land user or landowner. The Mayors Action Center routes many assistance requests to our office.

Township	# Technical Assists Provided (@ 1 hr)	# Site Visits Made (@ 2hrs)	# Letters or Reports Provided (@ 4 hrs)	# Conservation Plans or Surveys Provided (@ 6 hrs)
Center	0	0	1	0
Decatur	1	1	0	0
Franklin	7	7	0	0
Lawrence	11	11	3	2
Perry	6	5	0	0
Pike	9	8	1	0
Warren	7	7	4	2
Washington	13	13	2	0
Wayne	9	7	2	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>

**III. On-Site Development, Erosion Control and Stormwater Reviews, Contacts & Reports**

Following state law requirements and through a joint agreement with the City of Indianapolis, the Marion County SWCD assists developers and contractors by reviewing Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPP) for government sponsored projects and providing compliance inspections for SWPPPs during development for county construction sites with one acre or more of site disturbance. These assistance efforts take an estimated amount of hours shown below depending on the type of assistance provided to schedule, inventory site data, visit the site, make additional follow-up visits as needed, and write review or inspection reports. Most sites need 2-4 visits to close out a review or conduct inspections during the construction process. At any one time during the last year, the county has had at least 100 of these sites under construction. Site compliance and water pollution has only marginally improved in the past several years with 50% of sites visited not meeting their erosion & sedimentation SWPPP\* plan requirements this year.

Township	# Construction Sites Assisted (@1 hr)	# Provided Soils or Other Information (@ 1 hr)	# SWPPP* Reviews Provided (@ 3 hrs)	# Erosion Plan Inspection Rpts** (@ 2 hrs)	# of Site Inspections Made (@ 2hrs)
Center	52	0	5	18	31
Decatur	53	0	0	25	34
Franklin	62	0	3	25	46
Lawrence	29	0	5	4	13
Perry	59	0	4	5	40
Pike	35	0	4	7	20
Warren	35	0	6	8	18
Washington	51	0	5	14	28
Wayne	35	0	8	5	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>239</b>

\* Note: SWPPP = Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan \*\* Written reports detailing non-compliance issues

**IV. State and Federal Cost Share/Grant Projects- SWCD brought into county an additional \$70,968:**

The SWCD is always looking for ways to assist landowners via a variety of county, state, and federal cost share funds to assist with the installation of conservation practices in the county. Local funds are often limited or non-existent for the SWCD to provide monetary assistance for land improvement or land protection conservation measures. The projects can take a minimum of 2-4 days to several months depending on the type of activity needed. The following program funds are being provided through our joint, cooperative efforts with the USDA- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) assigned to assist the Marion County SWCD & the Clean Water Indiana Grant Program, administered by the State Dept. of Agriculture, Division of Soil Conservation and the State Soil Board.

Program	Funds Provided	Type of Project
NRCS Conservation Programs	\$44,190	901 acres of planned and/or applied land conservation practices
2 Clean Water Indiana Grants (CWI) Fall Creek Partnership	\$16,778	With Hamilton, Madison and Hancock counties, two 3 yr grants to hire a watershed coordinator to promote Backyard Conservation projects to improve water quality
Clean Water Indiana Grant	\$10,000	General District Operations Funds

**TOTAL CONSERVATION INVESTMENT LEVERAGED THROUGH THE SWCD - EACH CITY/COUNTY TAX DOLLAR INVESTED IN THE SWCD IS MATCHED BY \$2.40 FROM OTHER SOURCES**

# Meet Your SWCD Supervisors & Staff

## Elected & Appointed Supervisors

**Brian Neilson**, SWCD Chairman, a Perry Township resident, and Environmental Resources Engineering graduate of Humbolt State University in Arcata, California, is an engineering manager, for GAI Consultants in Indianapolis. Brian is active in the Water Environment Federation, American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), Indiana Association of Floodplain and Stormwater Managers, Indiana Water Environment Association, Hoosier Heartland RC&D, the Upper White River Watershed Alliance, and the American Public Works Association.

**J. Dennis Slaughter**, SWCD Vice-Chairman, a Center Township resident, is an urban planner who has worked in public agencies and private consulting. He has helped with numerous training workshop efforts on erosion control, tree preservation and site design. He is active in faith-based earth stewardship. Dennis is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners.

**Mark Kautz**, SWCD Treasurer, is retired after managing Camp Dellwood and other properties for the Girl Scouts of Central Indiana Council for many years. His conservation practices included stream bank erosion controls, timber stand improvement, and wildlife habitat areas. Mark has been a Supervisor for 20 years (and Associate Supervisor for 7) and is dedicated to soil & water conservation.

**Paula Baldwin** has served on the Board of Supervisors for approximately 19 years. She is a graduate of Butler University and helps manage her family's 450 acre cattle and grain farm in Decatur Township. Paula utilizes no-till, grass waterways, and haying of erodible lands to conserve soil and water on the family property. Paula is President of the Hoosier Heartland RC&D Council & represents the district on the Indianapolis/Marion County Tree Board.

**Heather Buck**, a graduate of Ohio Northern University with a BS in Biology and Environmental Science and a MS degree in Environmental Safety and Health Management from the University of Findlay. She is a Resource Planner at Christopher Burke Engineering and a resident of Franklin township. She is involved in the community serving as President of the Indiana Lakes Management Society, as an Area Representative for EnviroCert International's Certified MS4 Specialist program, as well as being involved in the Franklin township 4H club, Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts with her husband and children.

## Associate Supervisors

**Rick Bein**

**Marvin Brethauer**

**Bob Eddleman**

**Bob Kleinops**

**Mark Mongin**

**Henry Wallis**

**John Hazlett**

## SWCD Office Staff

**Marilyn Hughes**, Administrative Assistant

**Glenn Lange**, Resource Conservationist

**Julie Haxton Farr**, Resource Conservationist & Editor (PT)

## USDA - NRCS Staff

**Jerod Chew**, District Conservationist

## Project Staff - CWI

**Leslie White**, Backyard Conservation Coordinator

This SWCD Annual Report is dedicated to the memory of long time Supervisor Pete Baldwin

## Local Food - Healthy Soil

It's obvious that Marion County is serious about locally grown foods and the environment! Over the past year, the interest in these areas continues to "catch fire" through the work of many passionate Marion County volunteers, entrepreneurs and civil servants. Folks like Joyce Moore of Urban Patch, Linda Proffitt of Peaceful Grounds, or Maggie Goeglein of Fall Creek Gardens just to name a few of the many local food and conservation enthusiasts. Watch out! It's contagious, they will get you excited too if you have the good fortune to spend any time with these individuals.

A common theme discussed amongst all of these local food advocates is the importance of the soil. Ensuring the soil is healthy = key elements such as ability to absorb moisture, hold on to moisture, provide adequate nutrients, etc. Following are four basic principles to improving the health of your soil.

1. Keep the soil covered as much as possible.
2. Disturb the soil as little as possible.
3. Keep plants growing throughout the year to feed the soil.
4. Diversify as much as possible using crop rotation and cover crops.
5. Develop a soil health management plan or roadmap to soil health (we can help!).

Healthy soils certainly have the potential to produce a more bountiful, healthy harvest but they also play a critical role in improving our environment. Healthy soils help hold on to excess runoff and are chalked full of life that is critical to breaking down potential pollutants.

To meet up or discuss soil health strategies on your property feel free to contact me by email at [jerod.chew@in.usda.gov](mailto:jerod.chew@in.usda.gov) or call the Hendricks County SWCD office at 317-745-2555.

*Jerod Chew,*

**NRCS District Conservationist**

## SWCD Board Changes

There are some big changes coming for the SWCD in 2014. At our annual meeting we will have long time Supervisors Mark Kautz and Paula Baldwin stepping down as regular Supervisors, though they have committed to remaining active as Associate Supervisors. Mark has served as a Supervisor for 27 years in many positions. Paula has actively served on the Board for 19 years, also in various positions of leadership. We are in a great debt of gratitude to both of them for their many years of service in these volunteer positions and look forward to benefitting from their experience as they serve as Associates.

Earlier this year Marvin Brethauer retired and stepped down from his position on the Board. Heather Buck stepped up to fill his shoes and she will be staying on in 2014. You can read about her on page 5. John Haslett has volunteered to run for election for Mark's open position. You can read about John on the next page. We hope you will be able to attend our annual meeting on February 18<sup>th</sup> and will stop by to meet our new Supervisors. We are thankful for all of the volunteer hours that our Supervisors and Associate Supervisors give each month.

### Thank You 2013 Affiliate Members!

#### Silver Members

Marion County Farm Bureau

#### Nickel Members

Frederick Bein

George Haerle in honor of Eli Bloom

#### Copper Members

Bob Eddleman

Ruth & Paul Hayes in honor of Eli Bloom

***Become a 2014  
SWCD Affilliate Member***

Contact the SWCD office at  
317-786-1776  
or check out more  
information at our website:  
[www.marionswcd.org](http://www.marionswcd.org)

# Watershed Projects Make a Big Splash in 2013

Marion County is benefitting from two watershed projects that directly affect certain areas of the county. The Upper White River and the Fall Creek Watershed projects are multi-county programs that improve water quality through education and cost share assistance for conservation projects. Those working in Agriculture have benefitted from cost share programs to help install erosion control practices on their farms for many years. Now urban erosion and water quality practices are also being promoted through these programs.

Below are some of the activities and accomplishments that these two programs have provided in the past two years.

## 2012—mid-2013 Accomplishments

- \* 34 FCWP Cost-share applications to date and more planned
- \* 22 UWRWA Cost-share applications with FCWP outreach & technical assistance to date and more planned
- \* 15 Conservation practices implemented
- \* 250+ Rain Barrels implemented
- \* 450 Contacts

## Meet John Hazlett

Mr. John Hazlett, LEED APO+M is a Manager with Williams Creek Engineering with 15 years experience working in energy efficiency, water conservation, recycling and stormwater management. Previously, John was the Director of the Office of Sustainability for Indianapolis, where he led the implementation of the Mayor's SustainIndy initiative and secured over \$18 million in federal grant funds for various sustainability projects. John holds a Masters in Urban and Regional Planning from Portland State University with a specialization in Environmental Planning.

John will be running for Supervisor for the Board of the Marion County Soil and Water Conservation District.



## Presentations and Displays / Booths

60+ to civic organizations, farmers markets, master gardeners, schools, youth groups, municipalities, MS4s, non-profits, economic development corporations, and businesses

## Workshops

15 workshops have been offered on topics ranging from home drainage, how to build a pond, managing CSOs with green infrastructure, and a pond pro workshop to rain garden design and construction, rain barrel retrofit and painting, and stream management.

## Media (Articles, Video, Web-based Information)

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XvcNHI6J9eU>
- <http://www.wishtv.com/news/local/marion-county/abandoned-lot-to-become-rain-garden>
- <http://urbanpatch.org/2012/11/indy-rain-gardens-fall-planting/>
- <http://www.hancockswcd.org/Fall-Creek-Watershed-Partnership/>
- [http://urbanpatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/up\\_raingarden\\_yardsign.jpg](http://urbanpatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/up_raingarden_yardsign.jpg)
- <http://atgeist.com/blog/geist-water-quality-and-you-make-a-difference/>

Pockets of landowners from community to community who have become involved, along with demonstration projects, are generating even greater Backyard Conservation interest and applications. This groundswell of support for clean water conservation information, technical assistance and projects demonstrates real interest and need for support.

For more information look under the water tab at the top of our homepage at [www.marionswcd.org](http://www.marionswcd.org) or contact Leslie White, Fall Creek Watershed Coordinator at [leslie-white@iaswcd.org](mailto:leslie-white@iaswcd.org) \* 317-773-2181

## Marion County Soil & Water Conservation District



Discovery Hall, Suite 200  
1202 E. 38th Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46205  
(317)786-1776  
marionswcd.org

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### Marion County Soil & Water Conservation District

# You are Invited to the Marion County SWCD Annual Meeting Tuesday, February 18th, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

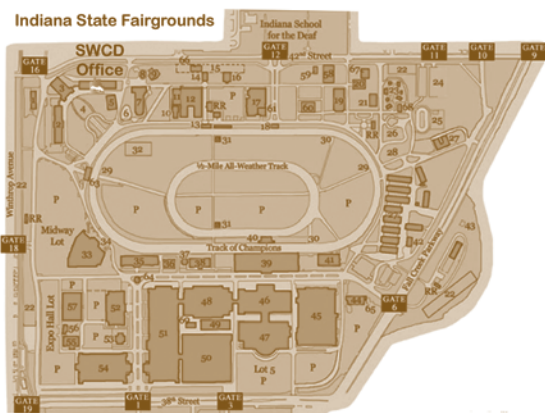
You are cordially invited to attend the 43<sup>rd</sup> annual meeting of the Marion County SWCD. We will begin with light refreshments starting at 5 p.m. We will give a short summary of the District's activities for the year and an election will be held for a Supervisor position.

Our guest speaker for the evening will be Dr. Tim Carter, Ph.D., director of the Center for Urban Ecology at Butler University. Dr. Carter will address the ecological problems

associated with alterations in urban watersheds and how they are using interdisciplinary use of technology, performance, public art and the development of an alternative currency program as outreach tools to connect the general public with their urban water system.

The meeting will be held on the 3rd floor of Discovery Hall, in the northwest corner of the State Fairgrounds, near the IDNR building.

There is no cost to this meeting but **please contact us by February 12<sup>th</sup>** to let us know that you plan to attend. Call Marilyn at 317-786-1776 or email [marilyn-hughes@iaswcd.org](mailto:marilyn-hughes@iaswcd.org)



Indiana State Fairgrounds  
Discovery Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room  
1202 East 38th Street, Indianapolis  
Enter gates 1 or 6 & follow the signs

For more information on the Marion  
County Soil & Water Conservation  
District visit our website:

[www.marionswcd.org](http://www.marionswcd.org)

**The Mission of the Marion County SWCD is to assist Marion County land users in conserving soil, water and related natural resources by providing technical, financial and educational services.**